DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 021 270 CG 002 349

By- Mowrer, George E. Marshall, Jon C.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTERESTS OF MALE HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS AND THEIR PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THESE INTERESTS.

American Personnel and Guidance Association, Washington, D.C.

Pub Date Apr 68

Note- 11p.; Speech presented at the American Personnel and Guidance Association Convention, Detroit, Michigan, April 7-11, 1968.

EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.52

Descriptors- *HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, *INTERESTS, MALES, *PARENT ATTITUDES, PARENT STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

The revised men's form of the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB) was administered to 30 male high-school seniors enrolled in an academic program and to their parents. The sons were administered the inventory in the normally prescribed manner. The parents were administered the inventory in the same manner except that they were instructed to respond to the items in the manner they thought their sons would respond to the items. The results of the study indicate that parents' perceptions of their son's interests tend to be fairly valid, and that the mother's perceptions generally are more valid than the father's perceptions. Furthermore, the results indicate that generally little additional information is gained by consulting both parents rather than just the mother. (Author)

The Relationship Between the Interests of Male High School Seniors and Their Parents' Perceptions of These Interests

George E. Mowrer and Jon C. Marshall
University of Missouri-St. Louis

Since the initial development of the Strong Vocational Interest Blank and the Kuder Preference Record, considerable attention has been drawn to the field of interests. A deluge of information on interests has permeated the professional literature during the past three decades. However, the development of interests is still a matter of conjecture. Little has been accomplished toward the determination of the relative effects of personal and environmental factors on this development. The question might be asked, "How well does one person perceive and understand the interests of another?" Cronbach (1963) points out, "Of all the psychological traits of the pupil, his interests are the easiest to find out about." How well, though, can persons who are continually interacting with another person interpret the other person's interests in terms of his likes and dislikes? More specifically, how well can parents predict the interests of their children? Logically, the children's interests must be reasonably stable before any degree of interpretation can be expected.

The stability of scores for young adults on an instrument such as the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB) indicates that interests are fairly well crystalized before a person enters college (Carter, Pyles and Bretnall, 1935; Carter, 1944; Strong, 1955). This does not mean that specific occupational interest scores will not or cannot change, but rather that for most students generalized interest patterns have emerged by the time they leave their home environment.

ED021270
CG 002 349

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Presented at the American Personnel and Guidance Assn., Convention, 1968.

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Davidson and Anderson (1952) suggested that the major factor in determining occupational level of a young man was his home and family environment, and that this seems to be even a more important factor than the school environment. Similarly, Cottle and Downie (1960) pointed out that one of the dangers in interpreting SVIB profiles of young college men was that they may reflect a tenacious family influence rather than true interests, and thus the profiles may change during the first year or two of college.

Other studies seem to indicate that there are factors besides the home environment that influence the development of interests. For example, Rauner (1962) found a significant relationship between students' knowledge of occupations and their stated occupational choices. Whether the acquisition of this knowledge was through the home, school or peers was not determined. It is interesting that vocational choices of high school seniors cluster in the higher socio-economic areas (Easterday, 1965). This may reflect an attitude in students of wanting to achieve a higher socio-economic status than was achieved by their parents. Conversely, it may be nothing more than a reaction to parental pressures upon students to aspire to higher socio-economic jobs. Thirdly, it may be a reaction forced by society upon the students through mass communication media and middle class teachers.

Strong (1955) suggested that the influence of family pressures of the development of interests should be carefully investigated. He pointed out that in a study of interests as measured by the SVIB, about half of those persons who indicated family backing in their occupation seemed to be appropriately placed relative to interest scores and satisfaction.

Whether the pressures exerted upon the person by his parents are active or passive is not of concern in this investigation. Rather, of importance in this study is the similarities in interest scores which might be expected to typically exist between an adolescent and his parents.

Problem

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the expected relationship between the interests of male high school seniors and their parents' perceptions of these interests as measured by the Strong Vocational Interest Blank.

Method

The general plan of this study was to administer the revised form of the men's Strong Vocational Interest Blank to male high school seniors and their parents in order to determine the relationships between the interests of the parents and their sons. To this end, a sample of SVIB profiles was collected for 30 male high school seniors enrolled in an academic curriculum and their parents. Since both parents were needed for participation in this study, only sociologically intact families were used.

The total sample was administered the revised form of the men's SVIB. The sons were given the directions to the inventory in the normally prescribed manner. The parents were given the same directions with one exception. They were told to respond to the items in the same manner that they thought their sons would respond to them. In this fashion, the parents were requested to indicate those interests which they perceived would be held by their sons.

The degrees of relationship of interests between the three treatment groups were determined using Pearson product-moment correlations, partial correlations, and multiple correlations. The SVIB standard scores were used for all calculations of correlation coefficients.

Results

The relationship between the interests of the sons and their fathers' perceptions of these interests was determined by calculating Pearson product-moment correlations for the son-father pairs across 58 scales on the SVIB. Column 2, Table 1 is the frequency distribution of the 30 obtained correlations.

TABLE 1

Frequency Distributions of Correlation Coefficients Between Profiles of Sons, Mothers, and Fathers on SVIB

Correlation (r)	Frequency					
	Pearson			Partial		Multiple
	r_{sf}	r_{sm}	r_{fm}	$r_{sf.m}$	$r_{sm.f}$	$R_{s(f,m)}$
+.95	0	3	5	0	0	5
+.85	7	10	8	0	3	13
+.75	9	9	7	1	2	5
+.65	4	0	4	2	4	4
+.55	4	4	2	2	7	1
+.45	1	2	2	3	3	0
+.35	2	0	2	1	5	1
+.25	2	2	0	8	1	1
+.15	1	0	0	4	3	0
+.05	0	0	0	2	1	0
-.05	0	0	0	2	1	0
-.15	0	0	0	3	0	0
-.25	0	0	0	2	0	0
Mean	.65	.73	.74	.20	.48	.77
Median	.71	.78	.79	.21	.50	.82

s = son f = father m = mother

The correlations ran from a low of +.14 to a high of +.88, with the mean coefficient equal to +.65; variance, .03; median, +.71; and quartile deviation, .12. Only two of the 30 coefficients were not significantly different from zero at the .05 level of confidence and 25 of these coefficients were significant at the .002 level.

Identical sets of comparisons were made for son-mother and father-mother pairs. The coefficients for the son-mother pairs ran from a low of +.29 to a high of +.95, with the mean coefficient equal to +.73; variance, .03; median, +.78; and quartile deviation, .14. All 30 of the coefficients were significantly different from zero at the .05 level and 27 of them were significant at the .002 level. Similarly, the coefficients for the father-mother pairs ran from a low of +.31 to a high of +.95, with the mean coefficient equal to +.74; variance, .03; median, +.79; and quartile deviation, .10. All 30 of the coefficients were significantly different from zero at the .02 level and 28 of them were significant at the .002 level. These latter two sets of coefficients are summarized in columns 3 and 4 of Table 1.

In order to gain a more complete picture of the relationship between sons' interests and their parents' perceptions of these interests, partial correlations and multiple correlations were determined. The mean correlation for son-father comparisons freed of the influence of mother was +.20 and the mean correlation for son-mother comparisons freed of the influence of father was +.48. The median coefficients for these two comparisons were +.21 and +.50, respectively. Furthermore, the mean and median multiple correlations between son-father, mother were +.77 and +.82, respectively. These results are summarized in columns 5, 6, and 7 of Table 1.

The normal approximation to the Binomial distribution was used to test the difference between the degree of son-father agreement and the degree of son-mother agreement. The analysis yielded a z = -2.37 which is significantly different from zero at the ~~.005~~ .02 level (see Table 2). This result indicates that there is generally greater son-mother agreement than son-father agreement.

TABLE 2

Significance of Differences Between
Son-Father and Son-Mother
Correlation Coefficients

Comparison	Number of Comparisons Above Companion Comparison	SE	z	Significance
Son-Father	8	2.74	-2.373	P < .0178
Son-Mother	22			

A randomized blocks design was used to test the differences of correlation coefficients among the treatments (sets of correlations) and among the blocks (family groups). Both analyses were significant at the .025 level with the treatment F = 4.44 and the blocks F = 4.21 (see Table 3).

TABLE 3

Factorial Comparison of Correlation Coefficients: Treatment Sets and Family Groups

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Significance
Treatment Sets	.1455	2	.0727	4.4329	$P < .025$
Family Groups	2.0030	29	.0691	4.2134	$P < .025$
Within Groups	.9508	58	.0164		
Total	3.0993	89			

It should be noted that the three treatment distributions were negatively skewed (see Table 1). This lack of normality should not impair the statistical results since the three distributions were similarly skewed and since the variances were equal (Hays, 1963). The t-tests following the significant treatment effects yielded two significant results (one at the .05 level and one at the .02 level): son-father vs. son-mother and son-father vs. father-mother. In both instances, the son-father mean correlation was the lower coefficient. The difference between son-mother and son-father mean coefficients was not significant at the .05 level of confidence (see Table 4). A t-test between the mean partial correlation coefficients ($\bar{r}_{sf.m} = .20$ and $\bar{r}_{sm.f} = .48$) was significant at the .01 level of confidence (see Table 4).

TABLE 4

Significance of Differences Between the Mean Correlations of Pairs of Treatment Sets

Comparison	Means (1)	Means (2)	SE	t	df	Significance
Correlation: (1) Son-Father vs. (2) Son-Mother	.65	.73	.003	-2.424	29	P < .05
Correlation: (1) Son-Father vs. (2) Father-Mother	.65	.74	.003	-2.727	29	P < .02
Correlation: (1) Son-Mother vs. (2) Father-Mother	.73	.74	.003	-0.303	29	P > .05
Partial Correlation: (1) Son-Father.Mother vs. (2) Son-Mother.Father	.20	.48	.083	-3.373	29	P < .01

Discussion

The results of this study suggest quite strongly that there is a high relationship between the interests of male high school seniors and their parents' perceptions of these interests. This relationship occurs when parents are instructed to respond to interest items as they think their son would respond to them. These results also suggest that parents are in fairly high agreement as to their perceptions of their son's interests.

The relative relationship between the two son-parent categories was interesting. The son-mother agreement on son's interests is generally higher than son-father agreement. This discrepancy between son-mother

and son-father agreement is increased considerably when the degrees of agreement are freed of the influence of the other parent. Furthermore, by collating parents' perceptions little improvement is made over the mother's perceptions of these interests. The result is not surprising and might be attributed at least partially to the fact that the mother is generally responsible for rearing the children.

It was noted by the authors that in a few instances there were extreme differences between son-mother and son-father agreement. For example, one son-mother relationship was characterized by a correlation of +.90 while the son-father correlation was +.23. Similarly, there were a few reversals: one son-mother correlation was +.40 while the son-father correlation was +.83. It was not possible in this study to account for the factors associated with the extreme similarities and differences in the reliabilities of parents' perceptions of their son's interests. The relative effects upon this relationship of inter-family communication, employment status of parents, socio-economic level of the family, attitudes and values of the parents, and the like should be carefully analyzed. Such information would enhance our understanding of the development of interests and would provide clues for the improvement of counseling procedures and the establishment of improved educational procedures.

Summary

The revised men's form of the SVIB was administered to 30 male high school seniors enrolled in an academic program and to their parents. The sons were administered the inventory in the normally prescribed manner. The parents were administered the inventory in the same manner except that

they were instructed to respond to the items in the manner they thought their sons would respond to the items. The results of the study indicate that parents' perceptions of their son's interests tend to be fairly valid and that the mother's perceptions generally are more valid than the father's perceptions. Furthermore, the results indicate that generally little additional information is gained by consulting both parents rather than just the mother.

References

Carter, H. D. "The Development of Interest in Vocations." Forty-Third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Part 1. Adolescence. University of Chicago, 1944, pp. 255-276.

Carter, H. D., Pyles, M. K., and Bretnall, E. P. "A Comparative Study of Factors in Vocational Interest Scores of High School Boys." Journal of Educational Psychology, 26 (1935) 81-98.

Cottle, Wm. C. and Downie, N. M. Procedures and Preparation for Counseling. Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1960.

Cronbach, Lee J. Educational Psychology, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., Burlingame, 1963, p. 186.

Davidson, P. E. and Anderson, H. D. "Career Patterns in Occupational Life." In R. G. Kuhlen and G. G. THompson (Eds.), Psychological Studies of Human Development. Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1952, pp. 456-464.

Easterday, Mary A. A Study of the Understanding of the "World of Work" of Seniors in Three Kansas High Schools. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Kansas, 1956.

Hays, William L. Statistics for Psychologists. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Chicago, 1963.

Rauner, Theresa. "Occupational Information and Occupational Choice." Personnel and Guidance Journal, 41 (1962) 311-315.

Strong, E. K., Jr. Vocational Interests 18 Years After College. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1955.

Authors

Mowrer, George E. Address: School of Education, University of Missouri-St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri. Title: Professor of Education-Acting Dean, School of Education. Age: 54 Degrees: B.S., (Education) - M.Ed., Ed.D., University of Missouri. Specialization: Counseling and Guidance.

Marshall, Jon C. Address: School of Education, University of Missouri-St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri. Title: Assistant Professor of Education. Age: 27 Degrees: B.S., M.S., Ed.D., University of Kansas. Specialization: Educational Measurement and Statistics.